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ABSTRACT

To investigate how values influence parenting beliefs and practices, a test was made of Kohn's hypothesis that parents valuing self-direction emphasize the supportive function of parenting, while parents valuing conformity emphasize control of unsanctioned behaviors. Participating in the study were 65 mother-infant dyads. Infants ranged in age from 9 to 23 months, with a mean age of 15 months. Mothers ranged in age from 18 to 39 years, with a mean age of 26 years. Families were heterogeneous with regard to social class, as measured by maternal education, family income, and occupational prestige of mothers and of fathers. Behavioral indicators of parental support used in the study were the total score for the Home Observation for Measurement of the Environment (HOME), a global rating scale on maternal warmth, and a scale rating the extent to which mothers read to their children. Behavioral indicators of constraint were subscale 2 of the HOME, a self-report measure of the number of times the mother spanked her child in the week prior to the interview, and a count of the number of times the mother restricted the child's actions or movements during the first hour of the home interview. Results were consistent with Kohn's hypothesis. (RH)

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The Relation Between Parental Values and Parenting Behavior: A Test of the Kohn Hypothesis

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Abstract

The fact that parents differ in terms of what characteristics they value most for their children and that these differences in values are systematically related to occupational conditions and education has been repeatedly demonstrated by Melvin Kohn and his colleagues. However, relatively little attention has been given to determining how values influence parenting beliefs and practices. Although all parents provide both support and constraint for their children to some extent, Kohn hypothesized that parents who value self-direction are likely to place greater emphasis on the supportive function of parenting and parents who value conformity are likely to place greater emphasis on controlling unsanctioned behaviors. This hypothesis is tested with 65 mother-infant dyads. The mean age of the infants is 15 months, and the families are diverse with regard to SES.

The results of the study are consistent with Kohn' hypothesis. Self-direction values are positively related to parental support as assessed by Caldwell and Bradley's HOME inventory, the maternal involvement subscale, and a global rating of maternal warmth. Conforming values are predictive of the following indicators of parental constraint: avoidance of restriction and physical punishment subscale, reported use of physical punishment, and the number of times the mother restricted the child's actions or movements during the home interview. The findings suggest that differences in how parents approach the task of child-rearing are due, at least in part, to the fact that parents value different outcomes for their children. Parents who share the goal of helping their children acquire needed competencies and adaptive characteristics, have differing ideas about what competencies and characteristics are most needed and how they can help their children achieve desired outcomes.

The Relation Between Parental Values and Parenting Behavior: A Test of the Kohn Hypothesis

In recent years there has been increasing interest in the determinants of parenting behavior (Belsky, 1984). Research directed toward understanding the reasons why parents differ in their approaches to child-rearing would seem to be a logical extension of the relatively rich literature linking parenting practices to the development of children. Drawing on the work of Kohn (1977), this study examines the role parental values play in influencing mothers' beliefs about appropriate child-rearing practices and ultimately maternal behavior.

Over twenty years ago, Kohn (1963) proposed that parents from different social class levels differ in terms of what characteristics they value most for their children and these differences in values contribute to differences in parenting behavior. Kohn (1979) asserts that "class differences in parental values result in large measure from differences in the conditions of life experienced by parents at different social class levels" (p. 45). Thus, the causal sequence proposed by Kohn can be diagrammed in the following way: social class --> conditions of life --> parental values --> parental behavior.

According to Kohn, the lower a parent's social class position, the more likely he or she is to value conformity to external authority. Parents who value conformity emphasize the importance of obedience, good manners, being a good student, and

neatness and cleanliness. The higher the parent's social position, the more likely he or she is to value characteristics indicative of self-direction, such as an interest in how and why things happen, self-control and responsibility.

Occupational conditions are an important determinant of parental values. In large part, parents value for their children those characteristics that have served them well on the job. Parents who work at jobs that are highly routinized, highly supervised and lacking in substantive complexity tend to value conformity for themselves and their children. Parents who work in white collar jobs where self-direction is rewarded, tend to value self-direction for themselves and their children. A second determinant of values, according to Kohn (1977), is education. Highly educated parents tend to value self-direction, and parents with relatively little education tend to value conformity.

Kohn (1977) and others (Wright and Wright, 1976), using large, representative national samples, have repeatedly demonstrated that social class is related to parental values for both mothers and fathers. Moreover, Kohn (1979) notes that a substantial relation between social class and values remains when numerous other factors -- including national background, religious background, urbanicity, region of the country and race -- are statistically controlled. Results consistent with the U.S. findings have been reported in other countries as well (Kohn, 1979).

Although the evidence linking social class to parental

values is impressive, surprisingly little attention has been paid to the relation between parental values and parenting behavior. What data there are tend to be based on parents' responses to hypothetical situations, and the parenting behaviors of interest are confined to disciplinary practices (Kohn, 1977; Gecas and Nye, 1974). The purpose of the present study is to examine the relation between parental values and maternal behavior -- specifically, maternal practices related to cognitive outcomes in children. In addition, this study will test one of Kohn's hypotheses regarding the relation between parental values and parenting behavior. Kohn (1979), like others, conceives of parent-child relationships as structured along two principal axes: support and constraint. Recognizing that the process of child rearing requires both, Kohn proposed the following:

> Because their values are different, middle- and working-class parents evaluate differently the relative importance of support and constraint in child rearing. One would expect middle-class parents to feel a greater obligation to be supportive, if only because of their concern about children's internal dynamics. Working-class parents, because of their higher valuation of conformity to external rules, should put greater emphasis upon their obligation to impose constraints. (p. 54)

Although diagrams of Kohn's conceptual model typically show a direct link between parental values and parenting behavior

(e.g., Gecas, 1979), his model was modified slightly here by including "parental beliefs regarding effective and appropriate parenting practices" as a mediating variable between values and behaviors. We do not see this as being new; rather, we believe that this link has always been implicit in Kohn's model, and others (Schaefer and Edgerton, 1985) have examined the relation between parental values and child-rearing beliefs. Values can be thought of as parents' goals or objectives. Child-rearing beliefs, as assessed in this study, are parents' ideas on how they can help their children achieve valued outcomes. In sum, we propose to examine the extent to which the data collected for this study support the following causal sequence: social class --> parental values --> child-rearing beliefs --> parental behavior.

Method

Subjects

Sixty-five mother-infant dyads, residing in Tompkins County, New York, were recruited for this study. The infants ranged in age from 9-23 months with a mean age of 15 months. Fifty-two percent of the infants were male and 43% were first born.

The mothers ranged in age from 18-39 years, with a mean of 26 years. Most were white (95%), married (83%) and not employed outside the home at the time of the interview (60%).

The families were a heterogeneous group with regard to social class, as measured by four indicators -- maternal education, family income, occupational prestige of the fathers

and occupational prestige of the mothers. Mothers' education ranged from 9-20 years with a mean of 12.7 years. Forty-five percent of the mothers had 12 years of education. Seventeen percent had less than 12 years and 39% had more than 12 years. Twelve percent had a four year college degree.

Level of family income was determined by having the mother check the appropriate income category for her family for the previous year from a list of 12 income categories. The median income category for the sample was $11,001 to $14,000. The range was from less than $5,000 to more than $35,000.

The Hodge/Siegel/Rossi occupational prestige rating system (Siegel, 1971), was used to assess fathers' occupational prestige. Mueller and Parcel (1981) argue that this measure and the Duncan SEI are the best available measures of SES. Prestige scores ranged from 16 (janitor) to 78 (psychology professor), with a mean of 37. Occupations listed at 37 include automobile mechanic and sheetmetal worker.

The same measure was used to assess mothers' occupational prestige. Prestige scores, for the 42 mothers who reported an occupation other than housewife or mother, ranged from 15 (food counter worker) to 63 (secondary school teacher) with a mean of 39.[1] Occupations listed at 39 include receptionist and telephone installer.

Most of the mothers were recruited either through the WIC program (43%) or at Well Child Clinics (35%). The upper income bound for the WIC program is 185% of poverty. Well Child Clinic

services are available to all families regardless of income. The remaining mothers (22%) were referred by mothers who had already participated in the study.

Measures

1) Home Observation for Measurement of the Environment (HOME): Parenting behavior was assessed with Caldwell and Bradley's (1979) HOME inventory. Three criteria were used in choosing a measure of parental behavior. First, the behaviors had to be related to developmental outcomes in children -- otherwise, even if a relation between values and behavior could be demonstrated, the obvious question is "so what?" Secondly, we needed a behavioral measure that is consistently shown to be related to social class -- otherwise, we could not test Kohn's hypothesis that values mediate the relation between social class and parenting behavior. Thirdly, we needed a measure that tapped both parental support and parental constraint. The HOME met all three criteria.

The HOME is an observation/interview instrument developed to assess quantitative and qualitative aspects of the rearing environment. The version used in the present study is a 45 item measure developed for children aged 0-3. Each of the items is scored "yes" or "no" and all items are weighted equally. A total score on the HOME is determined by counting the number of items scored "yes".

Studies have consistently demonstrated that the HOME is a strong predictor of various measures of cognitive abilities

(e.g., school achievement, language ability, IQ) assessed during the early childhood period (Bradley, 1982). Elardo, Bradley and Caldwell (1975) contrasted the predictive validity of the HOME and the Bayley MDI with a sample of one-year-old infants and their mothers, and found the HOME to be a better predictor of 3 year Binet IQ than the Bayley. Moreover, the HOME is predictive of cognitive outcomes in children when maternal IQ is controlled (Ramey, Yeates & Short, 1984; Gottfried & Gottfried, 1984).

Behavioral Indicators of Support: The total score for the HOME inventory was used as one indicator of parental support. In addition, two of the HOME subscales -- emotional and verbal responsivity (subscale 1) and maternal involvement (subscale 5) -- were also chosen, on the basis of conceptual criteria, as indicators of parental support.

Two other measures were used to assess support. First, a global rating scale called "Maternal Warmth" was scored by the interviewer. The Maternal Warmth scale is a five point scale that assesses the amount of warmth and affection the mother displayed toward her child during the visit to the home. Mothers who impressed the interviewer as being warm, affectionate and positive in their dealings with their children were given a high score on the scale. In the past, studies using global ratings of parental warmth have shown more consistent associations with cognitive outcomes in children than studies using counts of discrete affective behaviors such as smiling (Wachs and Gruen, 1982). Finally, the extent to which mothers read to their

children was assessed on a five point scale ranging from more than once a day (5) to less than once a week (1). With one exception, all of the indicators of parental support are positively and significantly correlated with each other; maternal warmth and reading to the child are unrelated (r = .08).

Behavioral Indicators of Constraint: Three measures of parental constraint were used in this study. The first is subscale 2 of the HOME -- avoidance of restriction and punishment. The second is a self-report measure of the number of times the mother spanked the index child during the week prior to the interview. The third is a count of the number of times the mother restricted the child's actions or movements during the first hour of the home interview. All three measures of constraint are significantly related to each other. Moreover, if scores on the avoidance of restriction and punishment subscale are reflected (i.e, high scores become low scores and vice versa), all three measures of parental constraint are either negatively related, or unrelated, to the measures of parental support.

2) Schaefer and Edgerton Revision of M. L. Kohn's (1977) Rank Order of Parental Values: The degree to which the mothers value conformity or self-direction was assessed with Schaefer and Edgerton's Revision of M. L. Kohn's Rank Order of Parental Values (Schaefer and Edgerton, 1985). This measure is comprised of 15 values -- six reflecting self-direction values, six indicative of conforming values, and three designated as social values. The

values are divided into three groups of five items; each group includes two self-direction items (e.g., to think for him/herself, to be curious about many things), two conformity items (e.g., to keep him/herself and his/her clothes clean, to be polite to adults) and one social item (e.g., to be kind to other children). Mothers were asked to rank order each of the three sets of characteristics from 1 (most important) to 5 (least important). (In order for the analyses to make more sense intuitively, the rankings were reflected [i.e., 1=5, 2=4, etc.] for the data analyses). A conformity score is computed by adding the rankings of the conformity items, and a self-direction score is computed by adding the rankings of the self-direction items. Because the two scores are not independent, only the conformity score is used in the multivariate analyses reported in this paper.

Schaefer and Edgerton (1985) reported test-retest correlations of .79 for conforming values scores and .64 for self-directing values with a sample of 124 mothers; the reassessment was done several months after the original assessment. They also demonstrated that when the individual items used in the values assessment task are correlated with each other, they form two distinct clusters -- that is, the conforming items are positively correlated with each other and negatively correlated with the self-direction items.

3) Parental Beliefs Survey (PBS): The Parental Beliefs Survey was developed for this study to assess parental beliefs

regarding effective and appropriate child-rearing practices. The PBS is divided into four subscales. For each of the subscales, study participants were asked to respond to several statements on a 6 point Likert scale. Responses range from strongly agree to strongly disagree. A) **Beliefs regarding spoiling the child:** Subscale A is comprised of seven items that assess whether or not parents believe they can "spoil" their infants by being responsive to their cries or by being affectionate. (Sample item: Responding quickly to an infant's crying encourages him/her to be demanding.) Higher scores indicate that the mothers believe babies can be spoiled by responsive and affectionate behavior. For this subscale, the reliability coefficient, Cronbach's alpha, is .86. B) **Beliefs regarding floor freedom:** Subscale B, comprised of six items, assesses the parents' beliefs regarding how much leeway an infant should be given in exploring the home environment. (Sample item: In order to keep a baby out of mischief -- that is, pulling things out of their proper place, playing with things that aren't toys, etc. -- mothers should strictly limit the area in the house in which the baby is allowed to play.) Higher scores indicate the mother believes the child should be given considerable leeway in exploring the home environment. For this subscale, alpha equals .58. C) **Beliefs regarding discipline and control:** Subscale C assesses the mothers' beliefs regarding discipline and control. There are four items in this subscale (Sample item: Parents should be strict with their year old babies or they will be difficult to

manage later on.) Mothers with higher scores emphasize the importance of being strict with their children and view disciplining the child as a particularly important parenting task. The reliability coefficient for this subscale is .78.

D) **Beliefs regarding verbal stimulation:** Subscale D assesses beliefs regarding the importance of verbal stimulation. (Sample item: Talking to a baby who can't talk may keep the parent occupied but it probably has no effect on the baby.) Mothers with higher scores emphasize the importance of providing their infants with verbal stimulation early, often and contingently. Cronbach's alpha for this subscale is .38. In addition to the fact that there are only four items in this subscale, the low reliability coefficient is probably due to the fact that there was not a great deal of variability in the responses given to the items in this subscale. By examining the standard deviations in Table 1, it can be seen that there is an inverse relation between the standard deviations of the belief subscales and their alpha coefficients; the least amount of variability is found on the verbal stimulation measure. Mothers generally endorsed the idea of spending time talking to their babies even when the babies were very young.

Procedures

When a mother was recruited, a home interview was arranged for a time when her baby was likely to be at home and awake. About one week before the interview, participants received two questionnaires in the mail: 1) Family Background Questionnaire,

which was used to obtain demographic information; and 2) Parental Beliefs Survey. Subjects were asked to complete the questionnaires before the time of the home interview, so that they could be picked up by the person conducting the interview.

The home interview generally lasted about an hour and a half. The HOME inventory was scored first; observation items were scored for one hour. Mothers completed the values assessment task after the HOME inventory was scored.

At the end of the interview, the interviewer examined the questionnaires for any items that had not been answered. Mothers were asked to complete any missed items.

Results

As noted earlier, the purpose of this study is to examine the extent to which the data are consistent with the following causal sequence: social class --> parental values --> child-rearing beliefs --> parenting behavior. We will begin by examining correlational data on each of the links in the chain, and then examine the extent to which the model is supported using multiple regression.

Insert Table 1 about here

Pearson correlations relevant to the first two links in the chain are presented in Table 2. As noted earlier, Kohn and others have consistently found that social class is positively related to valuing self-direction and negatively related to

valuing conformity. The findings from this study are generally consistent with those reported in earlier studies. Mothers' education, mothers' occupational prestige and family income are negatively related to conformity and positively related (though not significantly except for mothers' occupation) to self-direction. Fathers' occupational prestige was not associated with maternal values.

Insert Table 2 about here

The relations between parental values and beliefs regarding effective and appropriate child-rearing practices are also presented in Table 2. Consistent with Kohn's hypothesis regarding support and constraint, it was hypothesized that parents who value self-direction would emphasize their role in providing support and encouraging desirable behavior. Therefore, we would expect parents who value self-direction to emphasize being responsive to their infants' cries (rather than worrying about creating a spoiled child by being too responsive), and to be concerned with providing a verbally stimulating environment. In addition, it was hypothesized that parents who value self-direction would endorse the idea that few restrictions should be placed on an infant's exploration of the home environment (floor freedom). The data are consistent with these hypotheses.

Mothers who value conformity should emphasize their role in providing restraint and limiting aversive behavior. It was

hypothesized that parents who value conformity would believe that effective parents are strict disciplinarians who exercise considerable control over their infants' exploratory behavior. In addition, these mothers are more likely to be concerned about creating a spoiled, demanding child and thus believe in being more reticent in their responses to fussing and crying. These hypotheses are also supported by the data. The correlations between parental values and beliefs are all significant and, except in the case of verbal stimulation, the correlations are fairly substantial in magnitude. Although no causal relations can be determined, these results suggest that parental beliefs about appropriate child-care are based, at least in part, on the outcomes parents' hope to promote in their children.

From our point of view, the most important question addressed in this study is: are parental values and child-rearing beliefs related to parenting behavior? The relation between parental values, child-rearing beliefs and behavioral indicators of parental support are presented in Table 3. For the most part, the results presented in Table 3 are consistent with Kohn's hypothesis. Self-direction is positively related to three of the behavioral indicators: HOME total score, the maternal involvement subscale and maternal warmth. The relation between self-direction values and amount of reading to the child also approaches significance ($r = .19$; $p = .07$). Contrary to expectations, self-direction is unrelated to the subscale 1 of the HOME -- emotional and verbal responsivity.

Insert Table 3 about here

The child-rearing belief measures also are related to the parental support measures. Mothers who believed that babies can be spoiled by responsive and affectionate behavior provided less supportive environments regardless of the indicator used. Mothers who believed that infants should be given considerable leeway in their exploratory behavior provided more supportive environments as assessed by the HOME inventory and the maternal involvement subscale. They were also rated as being relatively warm mothers in their dealings with their children.

An emphasis on discipline and control was negatively and significantly related to all of the support behaviors except for reading to the child. Mothers who emphasized the importance of verbal stimulation provided more supportive environments as measured by HOME total score, maternal involvement and maternal warmth. However, the relation between verbal stimulation beliefs and amount of reading to the child was not as strong as anticipated ($r = .21$; $p = .05$).

As Kohn had predicted, conforming values are associated with behavioral indicators of constraint. As shown in Table 4, mothers who valued conformity had lower scores on the avoidance of restriction and punishment subscale of the HOME. They also reported using physical punishment more often, and restricted the actions of their children more often during the home interview.

Insert Table 4 about here

All four belief subscales are correlated with the avoidance of restriction and punishment subscale. The floor freedom subscale and discipline/control subscale are related to amount of physical punishment the mother used. Floor freedom and verbal stimulation (for no obvious reason) are predictive of how many times the mother restricted her child's movement or actions during the home interview.

Overall, the results presented in Tables 3 and 4 provide consistent support for Kohn's hypothesis regarding the relation between parental values and parenting behavior. Mothers who value self-direction tend to emphasize their role in facilitating desirable behavior by engaging in supportive behaviors with their children. Mothers who value conformity tend to place greater emphasis on discouraging behaviors they do not approve of by enforcing household rules. (Mothers who value conformity may define desirable behavior in terms of what they <u>don't</u> want their children to do -- e.g., "I want my child to stay out of trouble.") Obviously, all parents to some extent try to limit unsanctioned behavior and promote desirable behavior. Nevertheless, as Kohn has argued, parents differ in terms of what aspects of the parenting role are emphasized.

Earlier we proposed that child-rearing beliefs mediate the relation between parental values and parenting behavior. Values

describe what parents want in terms of outcomes; child-rearing beliefs are parents' ideas on how desired outcomes can be achieved. The results presented in Table 2, clearly show that child-rearing beliefs are related to parental values in predictable ways. To determine if values are directly or indirectly related to parenting behavior, multiple regression was used to determine if there is a relation between values and behavior when child-rearing beliefs are controlled.

For each of the behavioral outcomes, conforming values scores and the four child-rearing belief subscale scores were entered into the regression model as independent variables. For the most part, the results are consistent with the hypothesis that the effect of values on behavior is indirect, via child-rearing beliefs. Although conforming values scores are correlated with all of the behavioral indices of constraint and 3 of the 5 support indices, the conformity measure is a significant predictor of only the "restricts child's actions or movement" measure when the child-rearing belief subscales are controlled. In the case of the "restricts child's actions or movement" measure, the standardized beta for the conformity measure is the largest.

The proportion of variance explained by the five predictor variables, and the F value for each of the regression equations are presented in Tables 5 and 6. The F value for the model reached statistical significance at the .05 level for the following behavioral outcomes: HOME total score, maternal

involvement subscale, maternal warmth, avoidance of restriction and punishment subscale and restricts child's actions or movements.

Insert Tables 5 and 6 about here

Discussion

The purpose of this paper is to examine the extent to which data collected on 65 mother-infant dyads support the following causal sequence: social class ---> parental values ---> child-rearing beliefs ---> parenting behavior. Overall, the data support the causal sequence first proposed by Kohn over 2 decades ago; considerable support was found for each of the links in the chain.

Obviously, given that the evidence is correlational, no causal relations can be determined and any interpretation of the data must be advanced cautiously. However, given ethical considerations, it seems unlikely that this model will ever be tested experimentally and thus any final conclusions about the merits of Kohn's model will be based on correlational data, and the interpretation of those data.

Our interpretation of what the data mean is as follows. We believe that all 65 mothers in this study were genuinely concerned about the well-being of their children and wanted to do what was best for them; evidence of great concern for the children was found in every home we visited. However, we believe

that Kohn is correct in asserting that parents have differing ideas about what is best for their children and these ideas are based, at least in part, on conditions of life associated with the family's position in the social hierarchy.

Ogbu (1981) has argued that parents within a society or within a subgroup of a society, share definitions of adult success and the instrumental competencies that children need to acquire in order to become successful adults. Definitions of success and valued characteristics are largely determined by the subsistence tasks engaged in by members of the group. Kohn's data, as well as our data, support that view. Parents who value characteristics indicative of conformity are preparing their children to be successful adults; so are parents who value self-direction.

Support for the position that the demand characteristics of subsistence tasks are related to parenting practices is found in the anthropological literature. Barry, Child and Bacon (1959) analyzed data on 104 societies to test the hypothesis that "the emphases in child training will be toward the development of kinds of behavior especially useful for the adult economy" (p. 53). Consistent with their expectations, they found that in high food accumulation societies (i.e., agricultural and pastoral societies) the emphasis in child training was on such characteristics as obedience and responsibility, collectively referred to as compliance. Parents in low food accumulation societies (i.e., hunting and fishing societies) tried to instill

characteristics indicative of assertion; these characteristics included self-reliance, independence and achievement. Barry, Child and Bacon argued that assertion is adaptive in low food accumulation societies because the catch of the day depends on individual skill and initiative; if new methods are tried and fail, the group goes without food only for the day that the new method is tried. In high food accumulation societies, where food is harvested only periodically, there is a greater risk in experimenting with subsistence tasks, so compliance to proven methods is adaptive. In each type of society, parents attempted to instill those characteristics in their children that would serve them well in their adult roles.

Within a diverse society like our own, parents who have in common the objective of helping their children achieve a satisfying life have differing ideas on what is needed to reach that goal and how they can help their children toward that goal. For example, in our study, parents who valued conformity tended to agree with the statement that children who are held to firm rules grow up to be the best adults. Parents who valued self-direction were less likely to agree with that statement. It seems reasonable that two parents who differ along this belief dimension could demonstrate their concern for the welfare of their children by engaging in antithetical behaviors.

As others have pointed out (Laosa, 1981), making judgments about what constitutes "good" mothering is, at best, difficult in a society with as much sociocultural diversity as our own. In

Laosa's words:

> Indigenous patterns of child care throughout the world represent largely successful adaptations to conditions of life that have long differed from one people to another. Women are "good mothers" by the only relevant standards, those of their own culture. (p. 159)

Laosa also notes, however, that some child-rearing practices may better prepare children for the setting in which all children spend a good deal of time -- the classroom. It seems likely that parents who value self-direction will provide their children with experiences that will serve them well as they make the transition from the home to the classroom. Parents in our sample who valued self-direction tended to have higher scores on the HOME inventory than parents who valued conformity; numerous studies have demonstrated that scores on the HOME inventory are positively related to cognitive outcomes in children (Bradley, 1982).

Although we have no data on cognitive outcomes, Schaefer and Edgerton (1985) sampled kindergarten children and their mothers, and found that children of parents who valued self-direction scored higher than children of parents who valued conformity on the language and math scales of the Test of Basic Experience. Children of parents who valued self-direction were also rated higher by teachers on a curiosity/creativity measure.

We do not believe that parents who value conformity are any less concerned about their children's performance in school than parents who value self-direction; to the contrary, in our sample

parents who value conformity rated "being a good student" more highly on the values assessment task than parents who value self-direction. Again a more fine grained analysis of our data suggests that parents who value conformity may have differing views on how to prepare a child to be a good student than parents who value self-direction. Parents who value conformity tended to agree with the statement "One of the best ways to prepare a preschool child to be a good student is to teach him/her to be obedient." Parents who value self-direction tended to disagree with that statement.

In conclusion, we find Kohn's argument that parental values mediate the relation between social class and parenting practices very compelling when we consider our data in conjunction with his work and the work of others (Ogbu, 1981; Laosa, 1981; Barry, Child and Bacon, 1959). Obviously not every member of a given class will reach the same conclusions about what characteristics are most desirable in children, nor will everyone who believes that a certain outcome is desirable (e.g., obedience) use the same practices to try and achieve that outcome. Nevertheless, the fact that there are class related differences in values seems fairly well established, and our data provide support for Kohn's hypothesis that values, in turn, influence how parents care for their children.

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Footnotes

1. Some mothers, who were not employed outside the home at the time of the interview, listed the occupation they had prior to the birth of their children on the questionnaire. Any occupation written on the questionnaire that could be scored with the prestige scale (i.e., occupations other than mother, housewife, student) was used in the analyses involving maternal occupational prestige.

Table 1

Means and Standard Deviations for Social Class Indicators, Child-rearing Beliefs and HOME

Variable	Mean	Std. Dev.
Social Class		
Mothers' education	12.7	2.2
Mothers' occ. prestige	39.0	14.6
Fathers' occ. prestige	36.9	14.0
Child-rearing Beliefs		
Spoiling the child	19.1	8.8
Floor freedom	23.6	5.8
Discipline/control	24.9	7.2
Verbal stimulation	25.8	3.3
HOME inventory	38.1	4.3

Note. For all computations N = 65 except for mothers' occupational prestige (N = 42) and fathers' occupational prestige (N = 54).

Table 2

Pearson Correlations: Parental Values with Social Class Indicators and Child-rearing Beliefs

	Conforming Values	Self-direction Values
Social Class Indicators		
Mothers' education	-.38**	.20+
Mothers' occ. prestige	-.49**	.27*
Family income	-.24*	.17+
Fathers' occ. prestige	-.06	.05
Child-rearing Beliefs		
Spoiling the child	.68**	-.64**
Floor freedom	-.51**	.42**
Discipline/control	.60**	-.59**
Verbal stimulation	-.28*	.26*

\+ $p < .10$

* $p < .05$

** $p < .01$

Note: For all computations N = 65 except for mothers' occupation (N = 42) and fathers' occupation (N = 54).

Table 3

Pearson Correlations: Parental Support (Behavioral Measures) with Parental Values and Child-rearing Beliefs

	Parenting Behaviors: Support				
	HOME Total	Emotional Responsivity (Subscale 1)	Maternal Involvement (Subscale 5)	Maternal Warmth (Rating)	Reading to the Child
Values					
Self-direction	.26*	.08	.38**	.28*	.19+
Conformity	-.39**	-.04	-.40**	-.37**	-.19+
Child-rearing Beliefs					
Spoiling the child	-.56**	-.24*	-.60**	-.41**	-.30**
Floor freedom	.39**	-.02	.40**	.27*	.20+
Discipline/control	-.31**	-.21*	-.29**	-.32**	-.06
Verbal stimulation	.49**	.17+	.52**	.31**	.21+

+ $p < .10$

* $p < .05$

** $p < .01$

Table 4

Pearson Correlations: Parental Constraint (Behavioral Measures) with Parental Values and Child-rearing Beliefs

	Parental Behavior: Constraint		
	Avoidance of Restriction/ Punishment (Subscale 2)	Physical Punishment (self report)	Restricts Child's Actions or Movements
Values			
Self-direction	.19+	-.16	-.22*
Conformity	-.37**	.24*	.35**
Child-rearing Beliefs			
Spoiling the child	-.38**	.19+	.20+
Floor freedom	.40**	-.33**	-.34**
Discipline/control	-.27*	.27*	.10
Verbal stimulation	.40**	-.19+	-.29*

+ $p < .10$

* $p < .05$

** $p < .01$

Table 5

Multiple Regression Analyses: Parental Support Indices

Independent variables in all analyses: conforming values scores, and four child-rearing belief subscales.

1) Dependent variable: HOME Total Score

R square = .38

F (5, 58) = 7.25 p = .0000

2) Dependent variable: Emotional and Verbal Responsivity

R square = .16

F (5, 58) = 2.28 p = .06

3) Dependent variable: Maternal Involvement Subscale

R square = .43

F (5, 58) = 8.85 p = .0000

4) Dependent variable: Maternal Warmth

R square = .22

F (5, 58) = 3.25 p = .01

5) Dependent variable: Reading to the Child

R square = .11

F (5, 58) = 1.50 p = .20

Table 6

Multiple Regression Analyses: Parental Constraint Indices

Independent variables in all analyses: conforming values scores and four child-rearing belief subscales

1) Dependent variable: Avoidance of Restriction and Punishment

R square = .25

F (5, 58) = 3.93 p = .004

2) Dependent variable: Use of Physical Punishment

R square = .13

F (5, 58) = 1.75 p = .14

3) Dependent variable: Restricts Child's Actions or Movements

R square = .23

F (5, 58) = 3.51 p = .008